



A Guide to Talking About

**Topics to avoid on a resume
or job interview**



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Topics to avoid on a resume or during an interview

OBJECTIVE: Patrons will have an understanding of what to not include on a resume or say during a job interview.

NECESSARY SUPPLIES:

- Copies of *Topics to avoid on a resume or say during a job interview*

TIME REQUIRED:

60 minutes

LESSON PROCEDURE:

1. Introduce the class to the things that should not be provided on a resume or stated during a job interview.
2. Provide the class with copies of *Topics to avoid on a resume or say during a job interview*. Discuss each point as needed.
3. Answer any questions that participants may have about topics that should be avoided.

Topics to avoid on a resume or job interview

There are certain items that you should always omit from your resume or not discuss during a job interview. These things could allow the potential employer to discriminate against you before he or she even meets you, or during a job interview-place you in the do not consider category. While it was common in the 1970s and before to put an entire section on a resume devoted to your life outside the job, many personnel offices currently black-out any potentially discriminatory information before the person reviewing the resume sees it to avoid future EEOC (Equal Employment Opportunity Commission) problems.

Be sure to omit the following unnecessary information from your resume:

- **Height** - Even if you're of average height, the potential employer may not be.
- **Weight** - Too thin, too fat...any one of these might be a strike against you in the eyes of a potential employer.
- **Health** - Would you put anything besides "Excellent" on your resume? It's not likely.
- **Sex** - Though they may be able to guess this because of your name, don't mention it.
- **Marital status** - Depending on the company, being married can be an asset or a liability (and the same goes for being single). Putting your marital status on your resume may make the potential employer wonder if a married person is right for the job, rather than if you are right for the job.
- **Number of children** - Some employers may assume that if you have children, you will miss work more often than an employee who has no children.
- **Religion** - Whose business is it anyway? Yours and only yours. However, if you are applying for a job with a religious organization, you might want to indicate your religion somewhere on your resume, perhaps in the community activities section.
- **Ethnic origin** - You should avoid mentioning your ethnic origin or heritage, unless your goal is to fill a quota for the company.
- **Date of birth** - You don't want to be ruled out as too young or too old for a job before the employer even gets to meet you, so omit this information. The employer is only allowed to ask if you are between the ages of 18 and 65 (for most jobs).
- **Photographs** - Even if you are the most drop-dead gorgeous person on the face of the planet, do not include a photograph. What if you look just like the potential employer's ex-husband or wife? Again, you should be hired because of who you are, not what you look like. Only a few occupations, such as modeling, actually require good looks. So unless you are applying for a modeling position, photography, or acting position don't place it on your resume.

Ten Turnoffs for Employers

If the interviewer discovers any of the following items about you, it will, at the very least, paint an unfavorable picture of you in the interviewer's mind. In the worst-case scenario, it may mean an automatic dismissal from any further consideration with the company.

- Poor communication skills
- Lack of self-confidence
- Arrogance or overt aggression
- Dishonesty
- Tardiness
- Asking about salary or benefits too early
- Inappropriate attire or poor hygiene
- Lack of knowledge about the industry or company
- Lack of questions
- Prejudiced (racist or sexist) remarks
- Be sure to avoid exhibiting any of these traits during the interview.